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## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

wall paper designs. In what is known as half-binding the corners and one edge of each side together with back are alone covered with leather, the remaining surface being of cloth.

### CHINA PAINTING WITH WATER COLORS.

By EMMA HAYWOOD.



THE interesting fact is by no means universally known that china can be decorated with water colors properly prepared and afterwards fired with precisely the same effect as though painted through the medium of oils and turpentine. A very large proportion of amateurs especially find the smell of turpentine so objectionable that they reluctantly give up this branch of art rather than subject themselves to the annoyance. Others again who are anxious to learn the use of mineral paints cannot face the disagreeables usually attendant on the study, and even if they have heard of its being possible to use water colors and so dispense entirely with all unpleasant odors they hesitate because these colors not being in general demand they are uncertain if equally as good results can be obtained with them. To this I can confidently reply that after the china is fired it is impossible to discern any difference between the two methods.

A few details as to the manner of working with water colors may be acceptable to my readers.

There are of course different makes of water colors for mineral painting on the market, I would, however, recommend for preference those prepared by Richardson, and marked on the labels "Richardson's moist water colors for china painting." These colors are admirable, and in addition to their intrinsic worth, they possess the advantage of closely resembling in name and effects the well known Lacroix colors, so that anyone conversant with these would find no trouble in selecting from Richardson's list. This resemblance has been made a special study in order to avoid confusion. The paints are also put up in tubes of similar size and the prices are equally reasonable.

There are, however, one or two points that require particular attention when painting with water colors. In the first place, it is well to work them about with a palette knife when first squeezed from the tube until they are of a proper consistency for use, if not moist enough just dip the palette knife quickly in and out of some clear water which must be kept handy, repeat this process whenever the color thickens or dries too much. When painting dip the point of the brush into water occasionally, just as you would into turpentine when using the Lacroix colors.

There need be no waste for the paints can be used again and again after they have been put out on the palette, always provided that they are kept free from dust, it is only needful to remoisten them with water. It must be remembered that to decorate china successfully the color must be applied thinly, and allowed to dry thoroughly after each painting when another and yet another thin coat can be applied with advantage. The most frequent cause of blistering in the kiln is because the paint has been laid on too thickly in one application; amateurs are very prone to this fault. When painting with the Lacroix colors they are found to dry very quickly without assistance, but water colors require a gentle heat to protect them from dust, since they dry very slowly if left to themselves, moreover, unless thoroughly dried before the second painting they are liable to wash up. The work can be dried in a slow oven near a fire, or by the aid of an alcohol lamp. In the winter time the top of a radiator will be found a capital place for the purpose. Let it be thoroughly understood that the paint is merely to be dried and not half baked, as is sometimes carelessly done. This means destroying or partly destroying the mediums which are the conveying qualities and also the flux, both of which should remain in the color until the necessary heat is applied in the kiln to fuse the colors into the melted silicate or glaze of the china. Among the colors it may be well to mention some of the most popular. Of the greens, grass green (the lightest shade), brown green, a middle tone and shading green which resembles dark green No. 7, are the most useful tints. Egg yellow is a good color, English pink is a glorious shade for wild roses, apple blossoms, etc. Delph blue is much liked for monochrome painting. Scarlet is really the color it claims to be and is invaluable for painting nasturtiums combined with yellow or with the deeper iron reds for the various shadings. It can be used alone where desirable and there is no color in the Lacroix list to equal it in brilliancy as a pure scarlet. The matt colors necessary for the Royal Worcester style of decoration are also prepared for use by Richardson in the form of moist water colors. This is an immense advantage, for in addition to the trouble entailed

through having to grind up the dry color the novice finds it difficult to decide when it is sufficiently ground and does not know just how much turpentine and oil should be added. All this uncertainty is done away with since the color when squeezed from the tube requires only to be mixed with a little of the painting medium especially prepared for the Matt colors. The quantity is easily fixed because enough only is needed to make the color workable in place of water only, which with matt colors should be used very sparingly in order to avoid making the work weak and washy. It is a good plan to keep a little of the painting medium out on the palette and charge the hairs of the brush slightly by working about a little in it before commencing to paint.

For the ivory tint used in grounding which is a substitute for the vellum in general request a special tinting medium is made, this must be thoroughly incorporated with a sufficient quantity of color to cover a given space and is applied in just the same manner as the vellum, that is to say, it should be put on with a broad flat brush in sweeping strokes and must be at once blended with a pouncer made by tying up some cotton wool loosely in a piece of very fine old cambric or thin silk.

When the tint is quite dry and hardened a little by heat, as already recommended, the design must be clearly though lightly drawn in as usually done and the ground must be removed from within the lines. Everyone knows who has used the Royal Worcester colors how irksome is this process, since the tint has either to be scraped off patiently with a sharp knife or eraser or else removed by means of a preparation, which, while it saves very little time is liable unless great care is exercised to drop or splash on the ground outside the design and eat away the tint in spots.

All this trouble is obviated by the use of water colors, for the ground can be removed with the utmost facility by merely passing a dampened brush over the parts to be cleared and then wiping the color off with a soft rag placed over the finger for large spaces and tied over a blunt pointed stick or a bodkin for finger work and cleaning up the edges. The paste for raised gold is also prepared in a moist form. When squeezed from the tube it should be well worked with the palette knife, and water only is needed to reduce it to the proper consistency when not sufficiently moist. If it dries with long continued use, just dip the palette knife in and out of water and work it up again until quite smooth. It is much easier to keep this paste in working order than that hitherto employed, it should, however, be manipulated in precisely the same way and fired with the same effect. Remember that in either case the paste must invariably be fired before the gold is painted on.

It may be well to mention for the benefit of those who already possess oil colors, that whether they are painting with oil or water colors, provided the first laid tint is really dry, the work may be gone over alternately with either colors to strengthen and finish without the slightest fear of the previous painting washing up, any more than if the first painting had been fired. This might be quite an object to those not firing for themselves and living a distance from a kiln, also it is a saving of expense and risks.

In conclusion, I would remark that with the exception of the few points mentioned above, the method of working with either oils or water colors is precisely similar. The brushes required are the same, though great care must be taken never to use any that have been employed for oils without being very sure that they are thoroughly cleansed. It would perhaps be safer to take new ones as the expense would be but trifling. For tinting, the same methods are followed in either case, and when the work is finished the colors take the same time to fire and the same amount of heat to bake them, so that work painted in oils or water colors can be fired in the same kiln.

The white enamel for raised flowers, dots or lines works with much the same effect as Dresden relief. It is medium hard, this being the easiest form to manage for ordinary use, it has a good glaze when fired, whereas Dresden relief is dull, unless a tint is passed over it for a second firing.

Should it be desirable to put the raised work on in color for one firing, only a little of the necessary tint may be mixed with the enamel before it is applied.

A SUFFICIENTLY serviceable copy of a printed outlined decorative design may be obtained by damping a somewhat absorbent paper with a weak solution of acetate of iron, placing this on the print, and pressing the two together in a copying press. Should the design abound in detail, dampen unsized paper with a weak solution of sulphate of iron mixed with sugar water, and proceed as above.

VASES or cases of terra cotta employed to hold plants may be prepared for painting on them color forms by coating them with parchment or isinglass size to fill up the pores of the material. Oil or turpentine should be mixed with the colors employed.